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ABSTRACT

Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede have both proposed the possibility of "arguers-as-lovers." To get a better idea of how this "lover" stance might actually look, an examination of two individuals engaged in arguing would be useful. The written correspondence between two young scholars, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (a Christian) and Franz Rosenzweig (a Jew), written from their respective situations in the German army during World War I, proves to be a robust, loving, fertile dialogue between personal friends whose theological positions have often been characterized as mutually antagonistic. As a personal scholarly enterprise of inquiry, correction, and encouragement this correspondence reflects elusive yet promising tendencies as an enterprise of human interaction and reveals persons in process more than positions in conflict. Two themes support this thesis--the first theme shows a high degree of investment of each person with the other, which nourishes and strains the dialogue. This investment is manifested not only in the backgrounds of the person and the situation of the correspondence, but also in specific features of the letters. A second theme develops around the structural variety of the letters. The results of this critical dialogue can help in understanding the arguing process. For the two writers, instead of its being a "place to stand," it became a way to dwell together. (Fifty-nine notes are included.) (MS)

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# "IRON SHARPENS IRON": THE ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY/ROSENZWEIG CORRESPONDENCE

by

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Introduction

Nearly twenty years have passed since Douglas Ehninger developed his paradigmatic analysis of argument as method, delineating the purpose of argument as correction.[1] The article begins:

> When A engages in argument with B he seeks not to enlarge his antagonist's stock of information, but to disabuse him of error; not to add to B's repetory of facts or data, but to reshape a belief or alter an attitude which B already entertains.[2]

Beginning in this formal, philosophical style, Ehninger outlines the nature and boundaries in which argument is confined. He concludes the essay by claiming that argument is more humane than other possibilities for decision making. By humane he means that which elevates and dignifies man instead of minimizing and degrading him. Important to that project is argument's ability as "person-risking" and "person-making."[3] In his final paragraph Ehninger suggests the promise argument holds:

> The ultimate justification of argument as method, therefore, lies not in any pragmatic test of results achieved or disasters avoided. Rather it lies in the fact that by introducing the arguer 'into a situation of risk in which open-mindedness and tolerance are possible,' it paves the way toward 'personhood' for the disputants, and through them and millions like them, opens the way to a society in which the values and commitments requisite to 'personhood' may someday replace the exploitation and strife which now separate man from man and nation from nation.[4]

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[1]Douglas Ehninger, "Argument as Method: Its Nature, Its Limitations and Its Uses," Speech Monographs 37 (June, 1970):101-10.

[2]Ehninger, p. 1.

[3]Ehninger, p. 109.

[4]Ehninger, p. 110.

Ehninger offers argument as a method of fulfilling human social needs through its ability to engage the best aspects of its users. It is the nature of persons, then, toward which Ehninger turns in search of the values of argument as method.

The turn toward an emphasis upon the person using argument rather than the method itself received clear, vivid direction two years later from Wayne Brockriede.[5] His style in the opening line complements this notion:

> One introductory premise you must grant me if you are to assent to any of the rest of this essay is that one necessary ingredient...is the arguer himself.... I maintain that the nature of the people who argue, in all their humanness, is itself an inherent variable in understanding, evaluating and predicting the processes and outcomes of an argument.[6]

From the points of view of arguers' attitudes toward one another, their intentions toward one another, and the consequences of those attitudes and intentions for the act itself Brockriede develops three stances arguers may take in relation to other arguers. Using sexual metaphors of rape, seduction, and love, Brockriede develops the compelling virtues of arguers as lovers. However, the case he builds for arguers as lovers does not claim that rapists and seducers are capable of achieving the same goals as lovers (but shame on them for doing so). Rather, Brockriede shows how certain goals of argument cannot even be attained by rapists or seducers. He is speaking of the investing of self: "Only the lover can achieve this personal goal of argument. Neither the rapist nor the seducer invests his

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[5]Wayne Brockriede, "Arguers as Lovers," Philosophy and Rhetoric 5 (1972):1-11.

[6]Brockriede, p. 1.

self in the argument."[7] Like Ehninger, Brockriede has high hopes for the possibilities of arguers-as-lovers. Note his final statement (which follows a quotation from Ehninger): "Since only lovers risk selves, only lovers can grow, and only lovers can together achieve a genuine interaction."[8]

My purpose is not to pick a fight with either one of these scholars. I do not here challenge Ehninger (though someone should) to be more specific about the nature of a person. His whole theory of argument as method appears to rely heavily upon assumptions and terms presented as uncontested, some of which may be indigenous to American culture. Neither do I want to take issue here with Brockriede as to whether his emphasis is really on the arguers or on the transaction.[9] My concern in this paper is for a better idea of how this "lover" stance might actually look. Do we have anywhere to turn for examples of arguers in such transactions? What actual case evidence is there for or against the optimistic claims about arguers engaged in the ways Ehninger and Brockriede describe?

This paper proposes some observations from a case-study featuring the kind of engaging of persons in arguing, like the kind Ehninger and Brockriede prefer. I will show how the written correspondence between two young scholars, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (a Christian) and Franz Rosenzweig

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[7]Brockriede, p. 10.

[8]Brockriede, p. 10.

[9]James Klump adiresses this issue in his response to Brockriede at the Alta Conference in 1985. See the symposium "Who is an Arguer? A Conversation with Brockriede," in Argument and Social Practice: Proceedings of the Fourth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation, ed. J. Robert Cox, Malcolm O. Sillars, and Gregg B. Walker (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1985), pp. 35-44.

(a Jew), written from their respective situations in the German army during World War I, proves to be a robust, loving, fertile dialogue between personal friends whose theological positions have often been characterized as mutually antagonistic. The published correspondence, I argue, reveals persons in process more than positions in conflict.[10] As a personal-scholarly enterprise of inquiry, correction, and encouragement this correspondence reflects elusive yet promising tendencies as an enterprise of human interaction.

I shall develop two themes which support this thesis. The first shows a high degree of investment of each person with the other, which nourishes and strains the dialogue. This investment is manifested not only in the backgrounds of the persons and the situation of the correspondence, but also in specific features of the letters. A second theme develops around the structural variety of the letters. This examination considers the purpose, strategies, and outcome of the correspondence. In developing the two themes I show more attention to the arguers in the first section, to the arguing in the second.

I.

The principals of the correspondence (twenty-one letters written between May 29 and December 24, 1916) prove to have a good part of their lives wrapped up in each other. Eugen Rosenstock, born in 1888 to a

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[10]Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, ed., Judaism Despite Christianity: The "Letters on Christianity and Judaism between Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Franz Rosenzweig," with an introduction by Harold Stahmer (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), abbreviated henceforth as JDC. The first publication of the correspondence was in Franz Rosenzweig, Briefe (Berlin: Schocken, 1935).

wealthy Jewish banking family, became a practicing Christian at the age of 16.[11] After receiving a doctorate in law from Berlin in 1912, Eugen was appointed as lecturer in law at Leipzig. Franz Rosenzweig, born in 1886 to a nominal Jewish family, was a secular Jewish scholar immersed in doctoral studies of Hegel in 1910 when he first met Eugen at a convention of young scholars at Baden-Baden.[12] Following a brief tour in the military in 1912, Franz chose to attend postdoctoral courses in jurisprudence at Leipzig in 1913. He chose Leipzig because Eugen was lecturing there.[13] Franz, two years older than Eugen, was still unpublished and became the pupil of the younger, already published Privatdozent, Eugen. This period deepened the relationship between the two:

> The two friends met daily for their noon meal. Frequent conversations between the two concerned contemporary academic philosophy and its failure to satisfy the spiritual needs of the individual. Rosenstock, of Jewish origin, had found the solution in Christianity; Rosenzweig was living through an intellectual dilemma. The most decisive of these talks took place on the night of July 7, 1913.[14]

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[11]Eugen Rosenstock married Margrit Huessy in 1914 and, according to Swiss custom, added her name to his: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy.

[12]Harold Stahmer, "Speak That I May See Thee": The Religious Significance of Language (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 116; cf. Nahum Glatzer, Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Schocken, 1961), p. 20. A. Altmann, "Franz Rosenzweig and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy: An Introduction to their 'Letters on Judaism and Christianity,'" Journal of Religion 24 (October, 1944), reprinted in JDC, is silent about the 1910 meeting, claiming the two men met for the first time in 1913 in Leipzig.

[13]Glatzer, p. 23.

[14]Glatzer, p. 23.

Other persons were part of the personal investment between Eugen and Franz. Franz's cousins Rudolf and Hans Ehrenberg were both scholars who had left Judaism for Protestant Christianity, and by 1909 Franz was sympathetic to their conversion. Rudolf Ehrenberg was present during the discussion of July 7, 1913, and Franz frequently shared with him by letter the kinds of influence he felt from Eugen. The twenty-one letters of the 1916 correspondence between Franz and Eugen contain several references to "Rudi." The point I am emphasizing here is that Eugen and Franz had a personal and scholarly relationship which was interlaced with common friendships and important commitments. The relationship had begun in 1910 and deepened in 1913, culminating in a crisis for Franz: On the night of July 7, 1913, he could not resist Eugen's powerful presence—of arguments and personal faith—and Franz decided he would submit to baptism upon returning home. Instead, however, the ensuing months brought Franz to the point of reversing that decision and his choosing to remain a Jew. Beginning in the fall of 1913 Franz returned to Berlin and spent the next year involved in a renewed study of Judaism under Hermann Cohen. From the references to Cohen in the correspondence we know that Franz held great respect for him. It is clear that Franz's now growing confidence as a Jew can be observed through his boldness in relationship with Eugen in the letters. Returning to his studies of Hegel and Schelling, Franz was now more skeptical of Idealism and beginning to lean toward a more "existential" philosophy. In the fall of 1914 he entered military service.

Eugen Rosenstock continued to address the social problems of his day, which had prompted the 1910 conference. From 1915 to 1923 he and several

friends known as the Patmos group shared their ideas, many of which were published in the journal Die Kreatur (The Creature). Included among the contributors to this periodical were Franz Rosenzweig, Hans and Rudolf Ehrenberg.[15] Eugen and Franz, then, share some common family and friends, and these people's lives affect the relationship between Eugen and Franz, and that in turn affects (and is manifested in) the correspondence. Being both friend and colleague makes a more complex relationship than being just one or the other. The stakes seem higher, and the relationship between Eugen and Franz as colleagues is complicated by the events in their history. For on July 7, 1913, the teacher Eugen bested Franz, his pupil, in a deeply personal debate. Now the two friends found themselves in strange, new roles for each other. As the correspondence begins Eugen, staying at the home of Franz's parents in Kassel, writes to his friend at the Macedonian front.

We are discussing personal investment between these two men, and the opening letter, from Eugen and dated May 29, 1916, sets forth several strands which I am tying together in my discussion. The letter reveals the setting of the Rosenzweig home at Terasse I, Kassel, and suggests the elusive nature of the enterprise about to begin, dialogue by mail--correspondence:[16]

> My Gallant Noncommissioned officer Rosenzweig,
> While I am greatly enjoying taking your place
> here, and staying on for as long as I can, leaving no

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[15]Die Kreatur was published from 1910 to 1930 and edited by Joseph Wittig, Martin Buber, Victor von Weizsäcker. Karl Barth was an original member of the Patmos group.

[16]Altmann (JDC, p. 42) has Eugen staying in Franz's very own room in the Rosenzweig home. Eugen left Kassel on July 12, 1916, for the Western front, see Letter 5.

> room for you, the time seems ripe for a correspondence between us. If it has not been quite appropriate so far, we can at least now play a game in the open. Having read your article on Schelling, I feel for the first time without any reservations that I am at one with you in scholarly research. Of course, there is still the question of whether you are at one with me, or will be when I throw away my professional mask and appear before you in the part of a philosopher. To be jurist and historian has been burdensome to me for a long time. Now that I am boldly philosophizing in my work, and not only in the privacy of my thoughts, I must write to you in this capacity, too.[17]

Eugen is comfortable enough to speak in a self-disclosing manner, willing to risk the relationship by subjecting it (and himself) to a new task--philosophizing. This offer meets with Franz's approval, for he responds in his return letter:

> Dear R.,
>
> I fully anticipated your letter, so much so that I could almost have answered the second part several weeks ago. I too have indulged for some considerable time the thought of how nice it would be to have gotten both books out of the way,....
>
> ...
>
> Now, down to business: You have never--I mean to say during the last few years--been anything to me other than a'philosopher;' I have always felt that the jurist and historian were only incidental tendencies. The jurist and historian would have been at best interesting to me; the would-be philosopher has become a corner of my life. That the Privatdozent and the lieutenant has (or shall I say 'have'?) not noticed this, I put down to my churlish behavior. I have not the least reason to be grateful to you for the part you play in my life; it is your barest duty and obligation to be just what you are. The aforementioned churlishness now expresses itself again and says that it can't make much of anything from the hints of your philosophy that you have written down--and instead of hints it demands a sample! I have plenty of time here, and you only keep to the weight limit.[18]

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[17]Letter 1 (JDC, pp. 77-78).

[18]Letter 2 (JDC, pp. 80-82).

The opening sentence suggests that both Eugen and Franz had been in a process of moving toward the project of correspondence. Their friendship had not been completely interrupted during the previous two and one-half years, especially since both kept in touch with Rudolf Ehrenberg.[19] That friendship will then be subjected to an exercise in exploratory philosophy, of critical inquiry into the heart of each person's faith. Franz considers this philosophizing more deeply personal than merely academic. The outcome may be more revealing, and it is their responsibility to each other to proceed. One cannot mistake how the self-conscious regard Franz has for the once-intimidating presence of Eugen appears to have ripened into a more aggressive boldness. How much of this should be attributed to letter writing and its absence of face-to-face contact is, of course, speculative.

Let me now more briefly turn the discussion of the interpersonal investment between Eugen and Franz to the topic of scholarly research. While Eugen was stationed at Kassel he made use of the stay by assisting on a couple of Franz's research projects.[20] Indeed, it appears that Franz had requested Eugen read the two papers, and in Eugen's opening letter he refers to the Schelling essay. This editorial relationship between the

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[19]Rudolf may have even suggested to Eugen that he write to Franz. In his Preface to the publication of the correspondence in Rosenzweig's Briefe, Rosenstock-Huessy relates that Rudolf visited him during his stay at Kassel; see Altmann (JDC, p. 31).

[20]Franz had discovered and edited an unknown manuscript, "Das aelteste Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus" ("The Oldest Program of a System for German Idealism"), composed by Schelling, but preserved in Hegel's handwriting. It was published in 1917 by Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschafter. The other of Franz's projects was the publication of his doctoral dissertation, Hegel und der Staat, which appeared in 2 volumes in 1920.

two men proves significant, for it re-establishes their ties, and it helps shed light on what "common ground" they might have (e.g., "I am at one with you in scholarly research"). This publishing business frequently plays a role throughout the correspondence. It is the "second part" of Eugen's first letter, where he gives encouragement to Franz. That issue of practical expediency Franz takes up first in his letter, and in a future letter he will grant Eugen broad powers, what sounds like "blank check" approval on publishing arrangements. The two men are concerned not to let wartime circumstances immobilize their scholarship. News, advice, problems, and setbacks about the publishing projects are found in more than half of the twenty-one letters. Here is a sampling:

> Letter 3 (Eugen): I too dissuade you from Meiner, without feeling happy about Diederichs. I don't intend for a moment to send you anything that isn't ready for the press.[21]

> Letter 4 (Franz): Today your card of the 30th came. I leave everything to you. I don't put any value on the addition of a facsimile.[22]

The next-to-last paragraph of Letter 10 (Eugen):

> You will perhaps be annoyed that I have used your plenary powers to write on your behalf to Rickert about the Schelling essay. You would certainly not have roused yourself to do it of your own accord.[23]

About three-fourths way through Letter 11 (Franz):

> Yes, I wouldn't have gone to Rickert with the Schelling essay--for personal reasons; but a thousand kilometers as the crow flies makes one enormously indifferent, so it is alright. But after the various rejections I certainly no longer

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[21]JDC, p. 84.

[22]JDC, p. 85

[23]JDC, p. 107.

> trust your judgment and mine with respect to the value of the work.[24]

The last paragraph of the seven-page Letter 16 (Eugen):

> I must tell you about Rickert, whom I listened to for an hour during a two-day leave in Heidelberg, and to whom I spoke afterwards. To put it briefly: He thinks your monograph is too long. He is allowed only to present as much as would fill two proof sheets. He would like you to shorten it. Will you?[25]

Eugen continues the apparent bad news in language dripping with sarcasm, for both Eugen and Franz knew the Schelling discovery to be significant. Franz does not respond to this in his next letter.[26] In Letter 19 Franz begins:

> Yes, indeed: I have long suspected that you took professors of philosophy too seriously. Now it is a good thing that I should be the innocent cause of your having seen Rickert at close quarters. I can't shorten my book here and I would not if I could. You have unlimited power to do everything, even to offer the book to Meiner....[27]

Franz's response above, with its humor more restrained than Eugen's, nevertheless shows his growing confidence in his own work and in his academic responsibilities, and reflects both exasperation with the publishing saga and a desire to move on to other things. The ellipsis (following "Meiner") above is characteristic of the trend set early in the correspondence—that publishing is important but not to the suppression of other matters (e.g., "Now, down to business:"): I would argue that the

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[24]JDC, p. 116.

[25]JDC, p. 145.

[26]Letters 17ff in JDC follow an order which deviates from the German edition of 1935; see JDC, p. 146, n. 171., cf. Rosenzweig, Briefe, pp. 700-15.

[27]JDC, p. 156.

publishing issue plays a key role in getting the correspondence started, by providing a convenient, practical, mutually-acceptable expedient, attention to which can constantly be turned and returned. The publishing "stake" in the investment between these two men at times adds fuel to keep the fire going, sometimes "rubs salt in a wound," and nearly always --provides breathing room for the correspondents. It is a bone which can repeatedly be gnawed, and as the bone loses its flavor (fulfills its purpose), so the publishing issue waxes and wanes in the attention it receives. Yet it is only one bone in the banquet. Putting this another way, letters often need a catalyst: To get started (or completed or mailed)--one may need "an excuse" ("I owe Mary a letter"); the correspondent may have previously asked a question or given an instruction; one may have some "news" to relate. All these practical affairs demonstrate the contingent nature of letters: They don't "happen"...in a vacuum; they represent slices, cross-sections of ongoing processes in people's lives, and they become part of those processes. They are both mimesis and ktisis--reflections of persons' lives and creations by persons.

Next in our consideration of the personal investment between Eugen and Franz in the correspondence, I want to quickly survey some textual features, which I argue must be acknowledged as part of the ongoing arguing process which is the correspondence. I will discuss 1) salutations, closings, and epithets; and 2) the expenditure of labor represented by the letters. These are clues to the relationship.

A quick tabulation of the manner in which the writers open and close their remarks in each letter tells us that Eugen is much the more varied,

playful, and provocative. Franz's letter's virtually all begin "Dear R.,"[28] He most often closes with only his name or initials, sometimes as "Your F.R." Twice he included either "warm greetings" or "cordial greetings." In his nine letters[29] Franz uses only one epithet to describe Eugen (a subdued "my dear fellow"). Eugen, on the other hand, writes "Dear Franz," in half of his letters; "Dear R.," (once); "Dear Friend," (once); and four other quite telling ways...which seem to express Eugen's respect and esteem as well as his perception of the person Franz and his place in life (or in their relationship):

> My gallant noncommissioned officer Rosenzweig,[30]
>
> Dear Fellow (Jew + post-Christum natum + post-Hegel mortuum)![31]
>
> Dear Franz ben Judah,[32]
>
> D.R.! That is to say: Doughty Rival![33]

Eugen's praise of his "doughty rival" is only one of many referrals in the correspondence to the relationship between Franz and Eugen. He closes Letter 18, "I am your walking--Stock," meaning cane or stick. Earlier in

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[28]Exceptions are Letter 15: "Dear E.," and Letter 19, which has no salutation.

[29]Each person answered the previous letter. At one point, however, three of Eugen's letters arrived together. The number of total pages of correspondence is roughly equal between the two men.

[30]Letter 1 (JDC, p. 77).

[31]Letter 8 (JDC, p 94).

[32]Letter 16 (p. 139).

[33]Letter 20 (JDC, p. 161).

that letter he calls Franz "my dear counter-irritant."[34] Two letters previous he signs off "Eugenes [well-bred] Kakoethes [ill-mannered]."[35] Many of the above expressions and others reveal a conscious acknowledging of a personal relationship between the two men, and we sense that the relationship is sometimes a fluid one: The opening line of Letter 10 (Eugen)—"You give me every time a veritable breakfast of caviar."[36] Later, in the heat of theological diatribe, Franz begins,

> Early today I learnt by experience that rosewood [Rosenstock] is the hardest wood there is, so that I was forced to think of you, and exactly two hours after your letters arrived. Yes indeed, here is the real tough Rosenstock, and now I no longer have any difficulty in writing to you.[37]

Eugen responds in his next letter, beginning Letter 16 thus: "So, we have chased each other round in a circle. You end at the point where I wanted to begin."[38] Both Eugen and Franz use the term "step" ("marching step," Eugen; "proper step," Franz) as they discuss the process of their corresponding.[39] There needs to be understanding, cooperation, rhythm, yet there will be bumps, hazards, and hills. Movement forward, though, is essential.

The final section of the personal investment theme I devote to the great deal of expended energy represented by the roughly one-hundred pages

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[34]JDC, pp. 155-56.

[35]Letter 16 (JDC, p. 145).

[36]JDC, p. 103.

[37]Letter 15 (JDC, p. 129).

[38]JDC, p. 139.

[39]Eugen, Letter 6 (JDC, p. 90); Franz, Letter 21 (JDC, p. 164).

of correspondence. Besides the publishing business, the two men suggest to each other books to read, and they discuss various authors' works. Some of these efforts of scholarship are present, ongoing projects; others are newly initiated ventures. Each man seems willing to work for the other, each seems ready to listen to the other. Both offer their own arguments on issues. For example, Eugen grants Franz's request for more than "hints" of his philosophy by offering his calendrical analysis of history. Franz interprets this and offers his own contrary scheme (Letters 6, 7). Eugen confronts Franz with premise and hypothesis: "The stubbornness of the Jews is, so to speak, a Christian dogma. But is it, can it also be, a Jewish one? That is the fence I do not see you taking" (Letter 10). Franz responds with a twelve-page letter, half of which is taken up by his answer (and he regards his comments as "compressed...into tablet form"!) In the same letter Franz later makes a couple of his own rather concentrated requests:

> So requite me equal measure, and please explain to me your present idea of the relation between Nature and Revelation.
>
> ...
>
> One further question. Has Speech no longer the meaning that it used to have? Could you express better what you mean by speaking about it?[40]

These not-so-subtle, prompting demands elicit from Eugen a four-page, tightly-structured essay in the next letter. But prior to that structured response Eugen discloses the sweet torture[41] which the correspondence

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[40]Letter 11 (JDC, pp. 117-18).

[41]I borrow the expression from an article describing the bittersweet experience of preaching (and its preparation), "The Sweet Torture of Sunday Morning: An Interview with Gardner Taylor," Leadership 2 (Summer, 1981), pp. 16-29.

often brings, divulging that which sounds like it reflects not "puppy love" nor a "summer romance" but maybe "arguers as lovers"?

> Dear Franz,
>
> You are right about your concentrated coffee extract. And if I enjoy myself indescribably over such a letter, I realize how cursory and empty is my answer. Why didn't you come a year ago, or six months ago? Then I was charged up like a high tension wire.
>
> But at present I am like one of those damned batteries for pocket torches that you buy nowadays; and where there is nothing inside, friendship itself and the most heartfelt desire have lost their rights.
>
> You have a way of asking me things in such a correct, impersonal way that I stand nonplussed. I have never been asked anything like that before, and so I do not know how to answer.[42]

But, as I said, answer he did, and here is how the argument winds down--from indictment (including confrontation), without hesitation, to a natural, quiet close. The final paragraph of Letter 12:

> Do you now understand why I am so far from finding in Christianity the Judaizing of the pagans? That from which Christ redeems is exactly the boundless naive pride of the Jew, which you yourself exhibit. In contrast to the peoples talking the 372 languages of Babel, this pride was and is well founded, and therefore the Jews were separated and chosen out of all the peoples of the earth until the destruction of the Temple. But Christianity redeems the individual from family and people through the new unity of all sinners, of all who are weary and are heavy laden. That is Christianity, and its bond is equal need. My brain is going on strike and I am getting stupid. I only know that I should like to wax eloquent over <u>peccatum originale</u> [original sin] and <u>superbia judaica</u> [the Pride of the Jews], but the machine has run dry. I am so exhausted that you must make do with this. I feel as though I were always writing the same thing. My love to you. Fortunately you do not know what you do.[43]

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[42]Letter 12 (JDC, pp 118-19).

[43]JDC, pp. 122-23.

To sum up, then, the correspondence reflects tremendous expenditures of time and energy by these two men in military service, separated (Franz from parents, Eugen from wife; both from home) by a war whose duties at the fronts often allowed many hours of "leisure." The dozens of books they recommended, received, and read meant openings for new perspectives (which fed the dialogue); the essays they constructed permitted efforts to listen and respond to the other. The publishing projects provided ongoing, practical tasks requiring consideration and exchange of ideas and instructions. We also looked at the stylistic features of openings and closings of the letters, as both clues to the attitudes of one man toward the other and as indicators of the stress and strain of the relationship evolving in correspondence. Here were two men who had a great deal of personal, academic, and theological interests and history which was interlocked. The fluidity of their relationship prior to initiating the correspondence was largely a factor of Franz's pilgrimage through doctoral and postdoctoral studies, his direct talks and studies with Eugen, and his subsequent dramatic turnabout to Judaism, resulting in his embarking upon a brilliant, though short-lived career as renowned Jewish scholar.[44] The two men in face-to-face encounter in 1913 began a project of inquiry with each other which took on a different cast in written correspondence three years later.

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[44]Within two years of his marriage to Edith Hahn in 1920, Franz became seriously ill. He lived another six years with amyotropic lateral sclerosis, completely paralyzed and unable to speak or write. With the aid of wife and medical staff (and friends, including Eugen but especially Margrit Huessy) Franz completed dozens of published works. In December, 1929, Franz died. Encyclopedia Britannica devotes an article to Franz Rosenzweig (but not to Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy).

II

The second broad theme I want to develop has less to do with the arguers and the relationship between them (including the factors contributing to that relationship). I want to consider now the style of arguing in the correspondence.

It seems to me that the extraordinary variety and elusiveness of these letters speak of a "method" which is something of nonmethod. There is little explicit attention to procedures and rules. Save for the questions they ask of one another, the instructions given (mostly for publishing), the expressions of emotion, the self-disclosure, and the relaying of news, there are no rules laid down for how the correspondence is to proceed. No explicit commitments are given, no deadlines, no timetable for completion. The letters flow back and forth, mostly on a weekly or biweekly basis. There is a degree of regularity, then, which is apparently contingent upon several variables, many of them uncontrollable (e.g., mail service, with its weight limits and paper shortage--both products of the ongoing war; troop movements). Simultaneous with this paucity of explicitness on how to proceed, save to listen and respond, is a conscious awareness of exploring not only the other's position but one's own. Introspection is found mostly in those sections of the letters which are most self-conscious of the relationship. There are some introspective thoughts latent in the sections on publishing matters and discussions of books, and especially in expressed differences over other persons (e.g., Hermann Cohen in Letters 9, 10). The sections which formulate positions and articulate interpretive stances (e.g., Eugen's "essay"), however, cast light on the objective, third-person propositions. These sections are

most characteristic of "normal" debate. I would argue that the arguing process of this correspondence consists in all of the above forms (sections), and that one would err should he attempt to parcel off "personal remarks" or "old business" or "news" or "asides" from "the argument itself." Though the content and style of these "sections" differ, they (as I hope I have already shown) are inherently influential upon one other.[45] Franz's response to the overpowering case made by Eugen on July 7, 1913, was as much a product of the relationship as it was of the credibility assigned to Eugen or of his "arguments."

Let me illustrate this by quoting from a couple letters. In Letter 10 Eugen cleverly blends his remarks so that the personal relationship leads right into the scholarly debate. This is accomplished because they consider each other as the incarnation of his "position."

> Moreover, you overestimate the Christian in me. I am not Paul of Tarsus--unfortunately not. Before you my mission comes to a halt. You are the human individual, one whose particular qualities I recognize in spite of his being 'outside Christianity.' I see Judaism just as you prescribe it to the 'Church'--and to yourself--as for me, the revelation of God in the world from day day to day...becomes more and more a present reality here and now. The Jews are so much the chosen people....[46]

That four-page letter, with its concessions and questions, elicits a twelve-page response from Franz. His more formally structured way of dealing with introspection and assertion shows a reporter-like style.

> Dear R.,
> I want to begin to answer you at once. (I got your letter yesterday. I was thinking that the 103rd

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[45]I make a similar point in my paper, "Emphasis in Original: Arguing in One of Luther's 'Sermons,'" unpublished manuscript, University of Illinois, 1987.

[46]JDC, p. 103.

> Division would perhaps have come to Mackensen, and my letter would have had to make the journey twice over.) I am suffering a paper shortage as you see.
>
> Our present correspondence is suffering from the fact that on the one hand we could not put it off, while on the other hand it is still too soon for it. I can see that very clearly, because I am the one responsible for the long gap of the winter of 1913-14. I could not write to you then, though you were continually sounding me and were offended because of my silence...because I thought I had done with you as you were up to then. Formerly, I had confronted you as a point of view, as an objective fact, and you were there to summon me to an analysis of myself, and thereby cast me down. I would have liked to wait until I could again confront you as fait accompli [accomplished, irrevocable fact]....
>
> 'Then the War came.' And with it came a time of waiting against one's will, a chasm that one does not make artificially for oneself, but that was opened blindly in every life;... So now we are talking to each other theoretically, faute de mieux [for want of better]. But for that reason everything that we say to each other is incomplete, not incomplete like the flow of life that completes itself anew in every moment, but full of static incompletenesses, full of distortions.[47]

Thus, Franz not only refers to the shortcomings of writing but more to the uncertainty, the unfinishedness which their lives and their "positions" necessarily possess. Nevertheless, part of the corrective, inquiring process is to forge ahead and test one's (or another's) positions, to subject them to critical scrutiny. Note the shift away from first and second person, to the third person--as Franz, twelve lines later, begins his rebuttal:

> Now, to the point. You could have formulated your objection still more strongly; I should like perhaps later to do it for you. But first let's stick to your formulation. Yes, the stubbornness of the Jews is a Christian dogma.[48]

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[47]Letter 11 (JDC, pp. 107-08, ellipses in original).

[48]Letter 11 (JDC, p. 109).

Finally, this correspondence, for its self-conscious awareness of roles--their uncertainty and shifting nature--eventually moves toward an uncertain termination. The last letter is sent by Franz in December, 1916. The two men are still discussing books, publishing, and their own scholarly thoughts. Franz's rapidly growing interest in Jewish education in Germany begins to emerge as a topic, and other topics drop out. Life goes on. On the position of Christian and Jew in history there is no certain "conclusion." Common ground is found in the fact of the "religious life." Franz writes in Letter 21:

> You are certainly right that the religious life, when it has become a living reality, that is to say, the religious person...is something quite different in Jew and Christian, and even a contrast, though a complementary contrast, like a suture of two bones dovetailed together (thus before God they are the same, but before men they are direct contrasts). But behind the image on these two coins is hidden the same metal.[49]

As a gift Eugen, shortly after this last letter, sent Franz two litanies which he felt capped the correspondence. They, too, emit a fragrance of complementarity. The lines speak of the persons in relationship and the positions of those persons. The first litany begins,

> Perhaps each is alike
> Equally multiple;
> Each holds the wealth of his forces tied in one,
> Yet so manifold that the other
> May realize part of himself in the other.[50]

And from the middle of the second (longer) litany:

> Each other we can neither love nor hate,
> Neither tighter nor looser our dominion make.
> Astounded we are and must go on,
> As the spheres will lawfully utter their tone.

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[49]JDC, p. 164.

[50]JDC, p. 173.

> We are not rebuilt by our fights, our debates,
> We are reformed as the ages rotate.
> Of our own age we are as anvil and hammer.
> Who can grasp the bond between anvil and hammer?
> Who transforms the courtyard into the chamber?
> To Him who saw all, the split overlaps.[51]

What began, then, as invitation to "play a game in the open" (Letter 1) ends with a gift. It seems that the arguing in this correspondence, from within the broad perspective I have placed it, refuses to be neatly categorized into winner and loser. The apparent compromise expressed in the litanies is mitigated by each of the two men's awareness that he has imperfect knowledge on his own, that he is indebted to the other, and that he stands within the flow of history.

Conclusion

I think it would not be completely careless to consider Ehninger's nature and limitations of argument as method...as not entirely satisfactory for understanding this correspondence. Ehninger finds the correction of the arguer to be bilateral and nonenforceable, permitting of various levels and kinds of success, demanding a posture of restrained partisanship, and placing the "person" in a position of genuine existential "risk." The limitations of the arguer's method are that it is indecisive, that it can encompass only those situations in which mutually exclusive alternatives present themselves, that it is imprisoned within the "world of words," and that it addresses itself exclusively to means and never to ends.[52] Ehninger's first list, pertaining to the nature or

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[51]JDC, p. 176.

[52]Ehninger, p. 105.

characteristics of argument as method, I find to be quite useful and instructive for understanding the correspondence. But the Rosenstock-Rosenzweig correspondence begins with agenda which seem to elude pairing into mutually exclusive propositions. The "position" arrived at by the end certainly refuses to accept such a dichotomy. One wonders if this is not, perhaps, because Eugen and Franz chose to broaden the perspective to envelop all of history, thus cutting across the stasis problem. Their July 7, 1913, encounter was much more confined to debate of mutually exclusive alternatives; this encounter was not limited in that way. I find their "solution" (the compromise, so to speak, expressed in the litanies) appropriate as an (my) outsider's analytical description of their own mutual plight, but it is unsatisfactory for one who stands "outside" and has to make his own choice (i.e., the Gentile, pagan). Perhaps the greatest promise I see in viewing this correspondence as an example of lovers in argument--two persons in process instead of positions in conflict--is that Eugen and Franz were able to do what Ehninger describes in discussing means and ends. They were able to find implicit as well as (in place of?) explicit agreement (ends) so that their disagreements (means) could be aired. The distinctions were not always tidy, but the dialogue stayed alive, and that supports the notion that their respective ends were neither irrelevant nor contradictory. These two young men in uniform--Franz, at twenty-nine years, his life three-fourths completed, and Eugen, at age twenty-seven, having another half-century of life ahead--were wisely able to discipline themselves and to submit to each other. They were able to argue without the delusion that either of them could or would have the "last word."

A clear voice today advocating this kind of reasonableness and gracious, critical inquiry is that of Wayne Booth. His project of assenting as much as possible before refuting is one that we have seen in the correspondence. Booth shows that this is wise on one's own behalf (but hard to practice!): "We assume that, although refutation may often be needed, it should follow a rigorous reconstruction of what people have really tried to say."[53] But that is only half the story. Everyone benefits when arguing permits a pluralism which permits persons in process, with their imperfectly expressed ideas, to survive.

> Must critics kill each other? We may now answer: Yes, sometimes, but only when justice requires killing.
> ...
> Yet we have already seen that vitality comes even before justice. In the first place, the chances are still very high that most of the killing we witness is of straw men and thus both radically unjust to the real critic and a waste of everyone's time. Perhaps more important, the critic who unjustly kills an idea may incidentally
> kill his fellow critic, too; that is, he may drive him from attempting further criticism.[54]

What is additionally satisfying to readers of the correspondence, as learner-analysts of arguing, is that this discourse finds a measure of justification, some "virtue as its own reward." Many books were subsequently written and published by Eugen and Franz, and some can trace their origins to seeds planted in the fertility of those letters. Franz has been the most outspoken about the significance of the correspondence (and his relationship) with Eugen. But Eugen also spoke of it:

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[53]Wayne C. Booth, Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 217.

[54]Booth, p. 227.

> Sound calls forth sound, song calls forth song, and immmerable books given to friends bear witness by their often lengthy, poetical inscriptions to this infectious character of confabulation. I mention this so the reader may see...that the printed word was not radically different to me from the words spoken or written between friends. Fittingly, letters played an immense role in my own existence. Many books got started in letters.[55]

A request by Franz in Letter 21 resulted in Eugen's sending the rough draft of what proved to be Die Angewandte Seelenkunde.[56] Eugen wrote in 1954:

> True partnership puts my mind at the service of my partner and his mind at my service. Our minds work much better for our partners than for ourselves. The Spirit was not given to man for himself. Self-reliance is an abuse of the greatest gift of the Spirit, or our reason.[57]

Franz credits Eugen and his Die Angewandte Seelenkunde for being a strong influence upon his first (and probably most important) major work published after the war, Der Stern der Erlösung.[58] The results, then, of the critical dialogue between Franz and Eugen have seemed far-reaching. And how their arguing process could do that is important. Booth turns to

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[55]Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, "Biblionomics or The Nine Lives of a Cat," in his Bibliography-Biography (New York: Four Wells, 1959), pp. 22-23.

[56]Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, Die Angewandte Seelenkunde (Darmstadt: Roether-Verlag, 1924), now reprinted in his Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts, 2 vols. (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1963-64).

[57]Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, "Pentecost and Mission," The Hartford Seminary Foundation Bulletin (Winter, 1954), p. 21, emphasis the author's.

[58]Franz Rosenzweig, Der Stern der Erlösung (Frankfort on the Main, 1921; 2nd ed., Frankfort, 1930). Indeed, the rough draft was written from the trenches and mailed on daily postcards.

rhetoric in his consideration of how what he calls pluralistic criticism should look or proceed:

> Many readers will recognize that to move from topic to topic as I have done, defending the legitimacy of contrasting reconstructions within each topic, is to treat critical modes not as positions to be defended but as locations or openings to be explored--in the traditional rhetorical terminology topoi or loci. To work with (or in, or within) a topic, one need not (indeed, in critical controversy one can not) establish it as proved, as a permanent and unique truth. One need only show that the choice of topic makes sense to fellow inquirers; i.e., it must be a place where at least two inquirers can dwell together in understanding. It is not a position on which one stands, not a pedestal from which one looks out upon a world of error. Rather, it is an inhabited place in which a valued activity can occur among all those who know how to find their way in.[59]

I submit that in the venture of wartime correspondence Eugen and Franz found their way in, and instead of it being a "place to stand" they discovered ways to dwell together.

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[59]Booth, p. 339.